



Guidelines for the Use of Outcome Measurement

May 3, 2010

Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness Statewide Implementation Group (CSIG) recognizes the importance of data informed decision-making in supporting the ongoing progress of the Campaign and to support best practices among the organizations that provide services to persons who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Toward that end, state leadership has identified the following guidelines for the use of measurement in planning and evaluation activities.

Standard Outcome Measurement

All Campaign partners are encouraged to embed routine measurement of both program and service outputs and outcomes in their planning and evaluation processes. The following core outcomes will be reviewed quarterly at both the state and regional levels. Continuums of Care and individual agencies are also encouraged to conduct regular reviews of their data. These measures provide a standardized, minimum overview of the effectiveness of services and are based on existing data and reporting; additional measures may be of interest to locals and the regions.

Outcome 1: Homeless Prevention Activities

- Increased amount and effectiveness of homeless prevention activities

Outcome 2: Shelter Services

- For those who do enter shelters:
 - i) Reduced length of emergency shelter stays
 - ii) Increased number of persons discharged into stable housing
 - iii) Reduced number of persons who return to shelters

Outcome 3: Subsidized Housing Services

- Once housed through either prevention or rapid re-housing (homeless):
 - i) Retained households in subsidized housing more than 6 months (7+ months – HUD).
 - ii) Improved self-sufficiency as measured on the Self-Sufficiency Matrix.

Outcome 4: Case Management Services

- Improved self-sufficiency by documenting progress on individualized objectives for homeless and at-risk families and singles where case management is part of the housing plan

Outcome 5: Coordination of Services

- Improved care coordination between housing partners and with mainstream services

Setting Outcome Measures

Indicators of success should be written in measureable terms that include a performance target and any related threshold conditions. Performance targets should be based on both historical individual program performance and benchmarked performance (comparison to peer programs). To ensure that the evaluation process does not disadvantage programs/activities that target the “hardest to serve,” efforts will be made to match like programs by both program type and client population regionally or statewide. Where no similar program exists, that entity will be considered independently.

Review of Outcomes

Planning and evaluation groups, such as 10-year plan committees or continuous quality improvement committees, should regularly review performance. That review must include those charged with collecting the information to ensure that the measure has been properly defined and that processes for collection and entry are appropriate. The groups should also use the findings to guide decision-making about program improvements, in addition to sharing practices that can support improved results for benchmarking groups.

Regional and statewide outcomes will also be reviewed by CSIG.

Outcome Data Sources

Michigan’s Statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) provides a common platform to measure client-related outputs and outcomes. Through the common platform, the HMIS also provides automated environment for coordination of care as well as the opportunity to benchmark progress on all common consumer-based objectives and indicators. Guidance for those measures not incorporated onto the HMIS will be published to insure a common base for comparisons.